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Reinhard Eisener



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- 1 In order to place the personality and work of the wellknown *mutakallim* al-Māturīdī (d. 333/944) in their historical and regional context, the author, in a first step, gets down to investigating the spread of the Ḥanafite doctrine in Transoxania as well as the religious milieu of Samarkand during al-Māturīdī's lifetime, both, by focussing in particular on the analysis of preserved theological texts. Thereby it is shown that already at the beginning of the 3rd/9th century a distinct theological identity of the eastern Ḥanafīyya existed, different from the one in the central Islamic lands. Furthermore, it is proved convincingly, e.g., that the *K. as-sawād al-a'ẓam* the «Samanid credo» of Ḥakīm as-Samarqandī, is not to be considered as a, so to speak, proto-Māturīdite text, but as an independent one reflecting the then state of Ḥanafite theology in Transoxania. In a second step devoted to portray the thinker al-Māturīdī, his teachings and methods, the author in particular analyzes the *K. at-tawḥīd* and its intellectual basis in depth. From this al-Māturīdī appears as an open-minded and circumspect thinker who fed himself on multiple sources. In order to formulate a new synthesis, he used Ḥanafite tradition as well as models of opponents (e.g. Mu'tazilites, Ismā'īlīs, Dualists). In crucial questions (the nature of god, divine attributes, etc.) al-Māturīdī steered a middle course, previously developed within the Ḥanafīyya only with respect to the question of human acts. Thereby al-Māturīdī marks not only a progress, but a turning point in the development of the

religious doctrine in Transoxania. Beyond just testifying and demarcating the belief, as has been done previously, with al-Māturīdī's speculative theology Transoxania entered into the history of *kalām*. Nevertheless, it happened only a century later that in Transoxania, by disputing the Aš'ariyya, the thinking of al-Māturīdī was recalled and the formation of the Māturīdite school took its course. All this and much more is presented by Rudolph; well-founded, competent and scholarly in its best sense. Very rarely the reader may have the slight impression that the points at issue are led to a positive solution through a desire to establish a coherent picture of al-Māturīdī's person and work (see, e.g., p. 221 ff., the discussion of the *K. at-tawḥīd* as textual basis), but that does not affect at all the brilliance of this monography, which represents a challenge for specialists in the field, but can also serve as an exciting introduction into early Islamic theology and its distinct development in Central Asia.

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Thèmes : 7. Islam

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